



After Your Drain Insertion: Care of Your Drain

You are being discharged with a drain (tube) in place. Please follow these instructions for caring for this drain.

1. Wash your hands before and after changing your dressing or emptying your drain. Handwashing is the best way to prevent infection.
2. Empty your drain at least 3 times a day (when you wake up, mid-day, and before bedtime). If you have a lot of drainage, empty the drain more often. Wipe the bulb opening and cap it with an alcohol wipe after emptying. Squeeze the bulb to apply suction and replace the cap.
3. Keep track of how much fluid you empty and its color. (Your doctor needs this information). You may want to make a chart for each day and time to help you remember.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
time	quantity/color	quantity/color	quantity/color	quantity/color	quantity/color	quantity/color	quantity/color

4. When you change the dressing, look carefully at the skin around the drain for signs of infection. Signs of infection include redness, tenderness, odor, drainage seeping around the drain, or if the color of the drainage changes from a reddish or clear yellow to tan, green, or brown. If you see any of these signs, alert your doctor right away. Antibiotics may be prescribed for you.

Questions?

3rd floor clinic Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 301-496-5483

2 East After hours, weekends, holidays 301-496-3191

For emergencies: Call the NIH page operator 301-496-1211

Tell the operator that you are calling long distance. Ask the operator to page your doctor or the surgery fellow on call.



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Questions about the Clinical Center? OCCC@cc.nih.gov

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National Institutes of Health
Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center
Bethesda, Maryland 20892